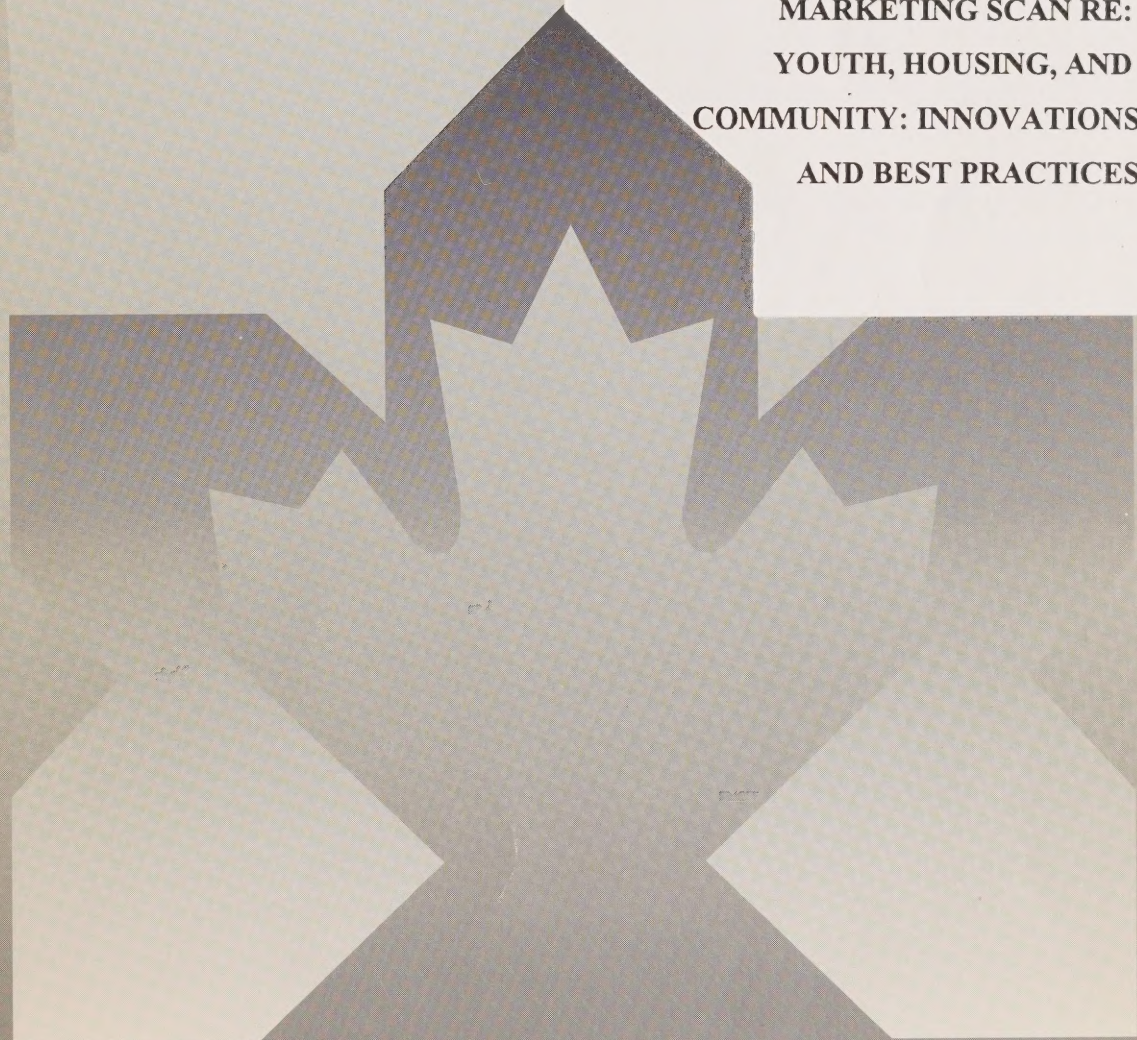


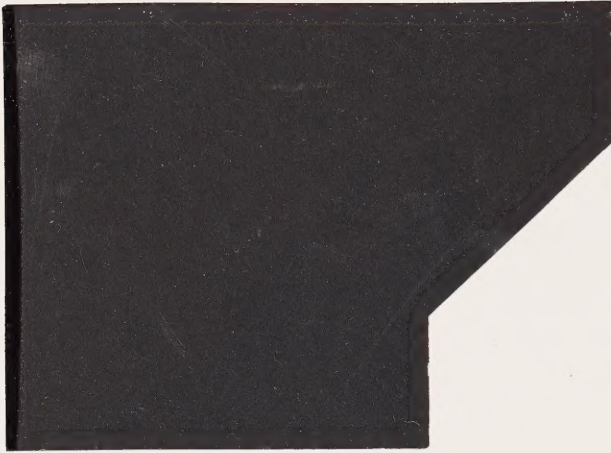
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**ENVIRONMENTAL AND
MARKETING SCAN RE:
YOUTH, HOUSING, AND
COMMUNITY: INNOVATIONS
AND BEST PRACTICES**





**ENVIRONMENTAL AND
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AND BEST PRACTICES**

By Luba Serge

December 15, 1996

CMHC Project Officer: Michael Macpherson

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NOTE: **DISPONIBLE AUSSI EN FRANÇAIS SOUS LE TITRE:**

Étude sur le milieu et la mise en marché: les jeunes, le
logement et la collectivité: innovations et meilleures pratiques

**ENVIRONMENTAL AND MARKETING SCAN RE :
YOUTH, HOUSING, AND COMMUNITY:
INNOVATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES**

FINAL REPORT


submitted to
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

by

Luba Serge

December 15, 1996

This project was funded by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), but the views expressed are the personal views of the author and CMHC accepts no responsibility for them.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation commissioned an environmental scan in order to demonstrate that there was a basis on which to proceed with this year's Housing Awards Program oriented to housing for youth. The purpose of the work was to carry out a preliminary investigation providing a brief demographic introduction to the youth population 15 to 30 years old, describing the main issues affecting housing for youth, identifying the agencies and organizations most concerned with youth and housing issues, and pointing to a number of housing innovations and best practices.

The scan was based on a literature review and direct telephone interviews with contacts in governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations across the country which deal with housing and youth.

The study found that there are a variety of analytical, statistical, and legislative definitions of youth in use in Canada. Available data defines youth between ages 15 and 24. However, based upon the current social and economic realities faced by youth, a number of organizations and analysts are extending the definition of youth to include those 25 to 30 years. The "Baby Bust" cohort, as it is popularly known, contains over five million persons. The defining characteristic of this group of youth has traditionally been the transitional experience of moving away from the parental home and becoming an independent adult.

The scan revealed a concern that the the current generation of youth is experiencing significant difficulty in the transition to adulthood. Due to major changes in the economy, labour markets, family structure, and government spending, the social and economic environment is very different from what it was for the previous generation. Youth are being affected in ways that can have important consequences for themselves and for housing. Little research has been carried out on youth and housing issues in Canada or in Europe. However, there is a growing concern about youth housing issues by national associations; youth organisations; and municipal and provincial governments.

Major Issues Related to Housing

The profound structural transformation of the Canadian economy, mainly characterized by unemployment and poverty, is having a tremendous impact on youth and their communities and has significant implications for housing. Suitable housing is pivotal not only for the well-being of youth but also for its function as the basis and symbol of independence.

Numerous agencies and groups contacted for the scan mentioned unemployment as a major issue; the highest rate of unemployment is among Aboriginal youth. As a result, youth tend to remain longer in the parental home. They may face difficulty gaining access to suitable rental housing and may have to delay home ownership. Poverty was identified as an issue for youth-led households, with single parent families having the lowest average income. Youth with below average income are least able to gain access to affordable and adequate private-market housing. Some organisations contacted suggested that inadequate housing can be linked to crime. A greater debt

load limits young people's ability to save money and subsequently delays the transition to home ownership. One other issue affecting youth, mentioned repeatedly by Aboriginal organisations, is that of youth suicide. It is difficult, however, to make a direct link between the incidences of suicide and adequate housing.

Housing Issues

Housing issues that emerged from discussions with organisations contacted included homelessness, the lack of suitable rental housing, a decline in the growth of social housing stock, and the inability of youth to enter the home ownership market. Unemployment and difficult home situations are factors that were seen to contribute to the increase in the number of homeless youth. Groups mentioned the importance of prevention and the need for more transitional affordable housing. It can also be difficult for youth to obtain suitable rental housing. Discrimination against youth, together with the difficult economic situation, means that youth often have to accept a poor quality of housing and overcrowded conditions.

The inability of youth to enter the private market has an impact on the social housing stock. At the same time, the scan revealed that social housing traditionally has not reflected the needs of youth. The rate of home ownership is also lower among youth-led households than for other households. New approaches to financing may be needed in order to enable youth to enter the housing market.

Housing Innovations and Best Practices

Youth housing issues are now gaining more attention and innovative solutions are being developed. Three main areas of solutions and best practices were identified in the course of the scan: housing for the homeless; education, integration, and participation of youth in housing issues; and housing design. Some organisations have responded to the needs of homeless youth by combining forces with other agencies to provide a range of transitional support services that will enable youth to reintegrate into the wider community. Housing agencies have undertaken a number of initiatives to better prepare youth for independence by including them in planning and decision-making. In some instances, youth are being trained in their role as tenants. This may include life skills training as well as learning responsibility through participation in tenant associations.

In the area of housing design, innovative builders have been involved in the production of housing that is affordable, adaptable, and more appropriate for youth. The housing industry is beginning to recognize the important role that this generation of youth will play in the industry's future, and that new approaches to meet their needs must be developed. Initiatives that respond to youth, such as flexible housing for evolving and changing households, transitional units which can accommodate 'boomerang' kids or those who have not yet left home, integration of offices to homes, micro suites, and zoning changes allowing conversion of single family housing to two family housing are actively being explored.

The Housing Awards, in making youth its focus, will highlight and share innovative solutions and best practices that are being implemented to meet the changing needs of youth.

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1. Introduction

This report reviews the current state of youth housing issues in Canada. The six sections of the report contain the methodology used; a demographic overview of youth; the issues that are confronting the population; major housing issues; and housing innovations and best practices.

The report contains five appendices:

- Appendix 1 Annotated bibliography and references
- Appendix 2 A list of major Canadian agencies, organisations, firms and key individuals involved in youth issues
- Appendix 3 Individuals and organisations contacted
- Appendix 4 Youth Intervenors - National Aboriginal Groups
- Appendix 5 List of Public Interest Research Groups (PIRG) at Canadian universities

2. Methodology

The information presented in this report is based on two primary sources; the literature review (see appendix 1) and direct telephone contact with governmental and non-governmental agencies that deal with either housing and/or youth. Lists of contacts were compiled in a number of ways: organisations such as the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA) were able to suggest members who were involved in youth issues or could comment on the issue of youth from a housing policy perspective (both governmental and non-governmental), resource lists published by the Canadian Youth Foundation and the Conseil de la Jeunesse in Quebec were used. These contacts were the basis for a "snowball" methodology - often contact with one person in an area or region would yield suggestions for other contacts.

One of the major difficulties in identifying the issues and the trends in both the literature and in discussion with agencies is that of the definition of youth. For example, Statistics Canada defines youth as persons between 15 to 24 years and thus much of the statistical information available about Canadian youth does not include the 25 to 30 year old group. Legislative definitions vary not only between provinces but also according to function (eg. legal, social assistance, child welfare). The differences in definition can often have a impact on services available as well as creation or compounding of problems, with categories of youth falling through the cracks. (Woodall 1992)

The Canadian Youth Foundation urges that the definition of youth be changed, attributing the current definition to the average age at which individuals leave formal schooling and enter the labour force. They maintain that the 15 to 24 year old definition no longer reflects reality and that the shrinking job market has considerable impact on the 25 to 29 age group. "It is clear that the changing demographics of youth have to be recognized so as to appropriately address the problems associated with youth unemployment. The definition of youth used by the government, therefore, is not an accurate reflection of the ages young people are leaving school and beginning careers. (Canadian Youth Foundation 1995)

The population currently between 15 and 30 is seen as a cohort by demographers, that is, an age group that shares childhood and youth experiences which shape certain attitudes and behaviour. (The precise years vary, for example, Murphy and Rudko, in a study for Health Canada (1996), used 1965 to 1977 define this cohort, whereas Foot (1996) uses 1967 to 1979.) As a group, the *Baby Bust* is clearly visible in population pyramids, reflecting a decline in the proportion of Canadians in this age group.

The second major difficulty in presenting information about youth and housing, perhaps reflecting its small proportion of the overall population, is the little research that has been undertaken in Canada. (It should be noted that similar difficulties occur in European countries.) The focus on employment has yielded information on rates of unemployment and the relationships between work and factors such as education. Homelessness and its causes have also been a focus of attention, although data on the size and composition of the population have presented major

methodological obstacles. Youth crime has merited special attention and is still the focus of much debate. While little information exists about the overall housing situation for youth and the impact and relationship between issues that have received attention and housing, the results of the scan indicate that the current and envisioned economic situation of youth, for which data do exist, are having an impact on the youth housing situation and on the choices available to them now and in the future.

3. The Youth Population

In 1995, there were over 6 million persons 15 to 30 years old living in Canada. (Statistics Canada) In 1996, 5.4 million Canadians were in the Baby Bust cohort, 18 to 29 years inclusive (Foot 1996. Murphy and Rudko identify 5.1 million, or 17.4 percent of the Canadian population as Baby Busters). According to some demographers, the Baby Bust cohort should prosper. However, this does not take into account a number of economic and social trends which appear to have profoundly affected this group.

Sixty-five percent of the Aboriginal population is under 29 years. Youth under 25 represents 59 percent of registered Indians compared with 37 percent of the total Canadian population. At the other extreme are young people leaving rural areas. In Quebec, for example, the propensity to migrate is especially strong in the 15 to 34 age group and is more pronounced in remote areas. (Gauthier and Bujold 1995) The farming profession has reflected this trend away from rural areas. In 1981, 21 percent of Canadian farmers were under 35 years of age. This proportion dropped to 16 percent ten years later. (O'Toole and Prud'homme 1993) New Brunswick has found that the migration of youth is having an impact on the demographic structure of the province, "...amongst the overall population from age 1 to over 90, the largest number of people leaving the province in any given year is the youth aged 15 to 24 years old." (Province of New Brunswick 1996) Youth will migrate to strong employment markets, such as the Beauce region in Quebec or to British Columbia, but a new obstacle may confront them - adequate and affordable housing in areas not prepared for this influx.

4. Major Issues Related to Housing

The core experience of the period between the ages of 15 and 30 is the transition to adulthood and self-sufficiency. A number of events constitute this transition; starting paid work and becoming economically independent, becoming sexually active, becoming eligible to vote, establishing emotional maturity and the capacity to make rational life decision, getting married, and becoming a parent. This process includes establishing a residence independent of the family of origin. (Darke, Conway and Holman 1993, Kerckhoff and Macrae, 1992).

Important differences exist in the trajectories towards adulthood. These are based, in part, on general economic conditions. Thus, the lack of employment during this period is seen as especially critical, for it is the moment in the life cycle when integration into society is attained. (Chicoine and Rose 1992, Roberge 1991). Social factors also can play a role. "There are important cultural and class variations involved both within and between countries...For example, the young adult son or daughter may earn an important component of the overall household income, and this may act as a constraint on their mobility. Family size, parental earnings and occupation, the size, quality and location of the family home will all affect patterns of departure by young people." (Burton, Forrest and Stewart 1989) Current research indicates that the trajectory in Canada varies according to ethnic group, with certain communities, (for example, the Iranian community) not only emphasising a longer period of time in the parental home but reliance on the larger ethnic community to support families experiencing difficulties with young persons. (Professor Varda Mann-Feder, Department of Applied Social Science, Concordia University, Montreal)

Unemployment was frequently cited by agencies and organisations as an important issue. Considerable attention is devoted to the issue in this report, in part because of its repeated mention as a major issue, but also because it has an impact on housing. A European analysis of the impact of long-term unemployment and marginalisation found that it leads to a 'lost generation' with members carrying the stigma of unstable employment throughout their careers. While this analysis "cautions against being mesmerised by a particular stage in the life cycle - it also emphasizes the importance of those formative stages for young people in the shaping of their lifetime housing and employment histories and their overall life chances." (Burton, Forrest and Stewart 1989 b) The changes that confront the current youth population are structural and, while similar to those that previous generations had to deal with in terms of experiencing a period of insertion into the labour market, this group will find that success in employment throughout their working lives will depend on their ability to adjust to the profound changes that have occurred. New housing choices and options will be required from industry and government to facilitate and support this adjustment.

4.1 Unemployment

The issue of unemployment or of underemployment was one which was mentioned by numerous agencies and groups contacted (for example, Canadian Home Builders Association (CHBA), the Canadian Federation of Students, the Canadian Youth Foundation). Recent Canadian reports have focussed on the issue (Ministerial Task Force on Youth 1996, Ekos Research Associates 1996, Canadian Youth Foundation 1995) Statistics support this concern - in early 1996, 17 percent of

those under 24 were unemployed, compared to the Canadian average of 10.4 percent and 9.9 percent for those 25 and over. (Labour Force Survey, cited in Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) 1996. N.B. CMHC work on youth and housing is in progress and data cited are from a preliminary analysis.)

Youth are more likely to be employed in clerical, sales and service jobs. Over the last decade full-time youth employment decreased while part-time employment was on the rise. (Statistics Canada, Historical Labour Force Statistics 1994 cited in CMHC 1996) The underemployment of youth is attributed to the lack of full-time employment as well as the combination of work and school, in part to support the cost of education, in part to get skills and training better suited to the job market. (Canadian Youth Foundation 1995) Nonetheless, over a quarter of those working part-time are doing so involuntarily. (Ekos Research Associates 1996)

Level of education has an impact on employment and has polarized the youth labour market. The unemployment rate for an individual with only primary education is 27.9 percent and decreases though the levels of education attainment to 8.6 percent for a university graduate. (Ekos Research Associates 1996) However the move into a career can take time - for a university graduate it can take up to two years to settle into a career-track job linked to their education. (Ministerial Task Force on Youth 1996)

4.1.1 Regional and sectoral variations

The highest rates of unemployment were in the Atlantic provinces, Quebec and the Northwest Territories (Statistics Canada 1994). These regional variations are not expected to change in the short-run and they are resulting in major population shifts. As mentioned above, New Brunswick is experiencing an out-migration of youth that has been directly attributed to the employment situation. In Newfoundland, the population pyramids in small communities are becoming skewed to older households, often with few children, reflecting the migration to urban areas following the collapse of the fisheries. In Cape Breton, the drastic reduction of employment in mines and in the steel industry is resulting in a similar transformation. Trends are not expected to change in the short term. For example, the reduction of households eligible for The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy (TAGS) benefits in Newfoundland is expected to further intensify the exodus of young households.

While employment statistics seem to be more positive for western youth (for example the unemployment rate for youth drops to 13 percent in Saskatchewan, Statistics Canada, Historical Labour Force Statistics 1994 cited in CMHC 1996), the impact of Canada-wide changes to the agricultural sector has been felt in the rural areas. Both the Canadian 4H Council and the National Farmers Union Youth emphasized the disappearance of the small family farm and its impact on youth. According to the National Farmers Union Youth, the last 15 years have been especially hard for farmers, making it extremely difficult to transfer farms from one generation to another. Technology is also pushing youth out - it used to be that the three sons from one family would each inherit a portion of the farm, now viability is possible only if three farms are merged. Youth

have migrated to the cities "I see more of the friends that I grew up with in a city like Edmonton, than in the small town I come from." Nevertheless, youth organisations appear optimistic - they see employment opportunities in the food industry increasing and find that young persons with agricultural backgrounds and education are desirable employees.

Aboriginal youth unemployment is of primary concern to national organisations. The rate of unemployment is higher. In New Brunswick, for example, the unemployment rate for the aboriginal population is twice that of the total population (33 percent versus 15 percent, Province of New Brunswick 1996) Organisations feel that along with difficulties related to lack of experience, discrimination is a further barrier to employment.

4.1.2 Impact

The impact of these changes on the communities and regions is creating concern for long-term economic and social conditions, especially in the context of a large ageing population. The demographic analysis undertaken by the province of New Brunswick illustrates the long-term impact of out-migration. Unlike in other provinces, the *Baby Boom Echo* (children of the baby-boom) did not occur in New Brunswick, further skewing the population pyramid. "It is believed that the out migration of baby boomers to other provinces in the late 1960's and 1970's contributed to this phenomenon." (Province of New Brunswick 1996)

The impact of unemployment in certain provinces and regions is of concern and the consequences on youth are expected to be severe. Structural changes in the economy have meant that youth unemployment, unlike past generations, is no longer simply a rite of passage. "Traditional sources of employment are changing. The skills required to forge ahead in the labour market are radically different to those required even a decade ago. And the prospects for career development are noticeably less promising." (Canadian Youth Foundation 1995) The core rate of unemployment has had a real increase of 400,000 persons since the 1960's. The unemployment gap between youth and adults has doubled from 3 percentage points in the 1960's to 6 percentage points. "This is an alarming rate of growth in the gap, since it represents an overall increase of about 200,000 unemployed Canadian youth, 1/2 of all overall increases in unemployment in the last 30 years." (Canadian Youth Foundation 1995)

There are fears that the changes in employment and the economic insecurity that has confronted many households in the last decade will have long-term impacts, especially on the young. "It appears...that the heaviest burden of adjustment has fallen on the youngest generation of workers - unable to get the kind of job experience that would give them a chance at a good job. How will this affect their life chances in the longer term? Will they be scarred forever by these unfortunate beginnings? Analysis by the Economic Council of Canada shows a pattern of higher lifetime unemployment for age groups who enter the workforce during hard times." (Maxwell 1993)

The impact on individuals can be far-reaching. Increased participation in education is attributed in part to the levels of unemployment. For example, youth (15-24) in school full-time has risen from 40 to 55 percent between 1976 and 1995. (Ekos Research Associates 1996) According to the Canadian Youth Foundation, a high level of job turnover can be a benefit to those who can adapt rapidly to changing job markets. Nevertheless, a focus group held by the Canadian Youth Foundation suggested that young Canadians have difficulty in adjusting to repeat unemployment. "It confuses them and disorients their understanding of the job market thereby hampering their ability to cope with the changing environment. It also lowers their confidence and self-esteem." (Canadian Youth Foundation 1995) The question of self-esteem was especially of concern to aboriginal organisations and many of their programs targetted to youth are focussing on this issue.

Youth for Habitat identified not only unemployment but also the lack of meaningful jobs, the "McJob Syndrome", as a primary issue. It is believed to have repercussions on youth taking their place in society and in cities. This is considered especially ironic by some youth groups as consumption is increasingly promoted. "Advertising is seen as a legitimate use of public space while youth are commonly prevented from utilizing 'the commons'." (Youth for Habitat)

Efforts to increase youth employment have led to a number of partnership initiatives such as Youth Business, set up by the Canadian Youth Foundation, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and the Royal Bank. The initiative is based on three aspects of setting up a business - mentoring, business support and lending. The first pilot projects have been initiated in London and Scarborough, with four more expected by the end of the year (including Halifax and Calgary) and twelve more in 1997. The Aboriginal Youth Business Council is an electronic network designed to encourage entrepreneurship by First Nations youth. Support offered includes programs and services, profiles of aboriginal entrepreneurs and links to other Internet business resources. The Canadian Youth Foundation identifies a movement toward self-employment by youth. Citing Statistics Canada, there was an increase of 11,000 small-businesses operated by youth aged 15-24 between 1989 and 1993 (115,000 to 126,000). If persons aged 25 to 29 are included, it is estimated that 30 percent of small Canadian businesses are owned by young people. (Canadian Youth Foundation 1995)

While these initiatives were greeted with enthusiasm by the Ministerial Task Force and have gained the support of a number of youth organisations such as the Canadian Youth Foundation, not all youth believe that this is the solution. A parallel conference, held in Quebec by youth on the social and economic future of the province, found little interest in youth entrepreneurship. A number of participants felt that its promotion was a way to put the responsibility of job creation on youth while the private and public sectors washed their hands of the issue. (Conseil Permanent de la Jeunesse 1996)

4.1.3 Implications for Housing

The difficulties of finding stable and suitable employment and the fear that the situation in the future will improve, is directly linked to the housing choices that youth have. The results range

from remaining longer in the parental home, difficulties in gaining access to suitable rental housing, to delayed, if not unrealised home ownership. A number of studies have begun to point to the relationship between household formation and labour and earnings (both real and potential). Analysis of the American National Longitudinal Surveys indicates that both the cost of housing (rental and ownership) and the potential labour earnings will be important variables in the decision to remain with parents or to live with a group or separately. (Haurin et al. 1994, 1993, McElroy 1985) Canadian data point to youth staying longer in the parental home which may be linked to reduced employment opportunities.

While many young persons are opting for a longer period of education to increase their employability, student housing choices also are limited. Many institutions are no longer providing housing for their students, rather, many residences have now been eliminated or cut back. Projects, such as the Triangle Rose Co-op in Montreal, offer student-initiated and student-run housing. These examples are exceptions, reflecting both the scarcity of governmental funds for housing and the low priority that students command in the allocation of resources. Most students, it would appear, live in rental housing, often sharing units with others.

Youth with training would appear to be taking longer to settle into a career-related job, with many young people becoming *portfolio workers* as they move from one short-term contract to another, often in different cities and regions. (Examples of people working in this way for up to eight years were cited by a number of key informants.) This uncertainty of employment and income not only delays the transition to home ownership but, perhaps more importantly, delays both the creation of roots and the integration into a community.

CMHC market analysts in two strong Canadian employment centres (Calgary and Vancouver) indicated that youth still had higher unemployment rates than other workers in the area and that housing was an issue. In British Columbia, while jobs increased by 25 per cent for those over 25 years since 1988, the increase for those younger was only 5 per cent during the same period. (Globe and Mail, November 14, 1996) The housing situation further intensifies this problem. In Vancouver not only has little new rental construction occurred (an annual average of 300-400 starts) but, when coupled with conversion to condominiums (an annual average of 2,500 units), has resulted in very low vacancy rates. The development of micro-units, self-contained apartments of less than 240 square feet, have been one response, while accessory apartments, many which may be illegal and sub-standard, are another. In Calgary and Vancouver informants observed that doubling up was a solution for young persons. The home ownership market is no easier. High prices, fuelled by the influx of immigrants, have made home ownership an unrealistic goal for many youth or has lead to high mortgage debts in British Columbia. Coupled with frequently substantial student loans (the average student loan debt carried by a fourth year B.C. student was \$22,000 in 1995) the result has been record levels of consumer bankruptcies. (Globe and Mail, November 14, 1996)

4.2 Poverty

Young families are identified as a group that have lost economic power in the last few years. "Young families with heads under the age of 25 have lost dramatically in terms of their purchasing power -- raising questions about their entry into the labour market, their long-term security, what kind of occupational trajectories they can anticipate." (Canadian Social Trends 1994) Average family income does not reflect the polarisation within this group, a polarisation which is due to age, family structure (single or two-parent) and economic structure (single or dual-wage earner families).

Data for 1991 indicate that there were significant differences between youth-led household incomes (\$27, 470) and those of older age groups (ranging from \$48,471 for the 25-44 age group to \$53,699 for the 45-64 age group, Core Housing Need Database 1988 & 1991 cited in CMHC 1996) These households are not catching up to the rest of the population - average incomes increased by only 9.1 percent between 1988 and 1991, compared to a 15 to 29 percent increase for older households.(Core Housing Need Database 1988 & 1991 cited in CMHC 1996)

Single parent families led by youth are of particular concern for a number of organisations, including those dealing with child welfare. This group has the lowest average income among youth-led households - \$15,335 compared to \$24,943 for individuals and \$33,211 for families. (Core Housing Need Database 1988 & 1991 cited in CMHC 1996) The inability of many young parents to assume responsibility for young children and frequent situations where extended family support is not available (because of lack of parenting ability or distance from the new parent) further compounds a precarious situation.

Other categories of youth are falling through the cracks. Some provincial governments have reduced social assistance to youth. This group of youth now has no option but to become homeless or go back to parental situations which are often unsuitable. In addition, the rise in child prostitution is often related to the difficulty for young people, especially the youngest with few skills, to find legitimate work or financial support.

4.2.1 Implications for housing

The population with below average incomes is that which is least able to gain access to affordable and adequate private-market housing. The supply of subsidized housing has remained relatively stable as funding for programs has been reduced. The demographic structure of the Canadian population makes it probable that the units that have been produced are primarily occupied by the older generation, one, which in all likelihood, will remain in these units for a few more decades. Access is more difficult for the youth population, a concern which has pushed the Co-operative Housing Federation, to undertake research on the accessibility of their units to young households. Some public housing corporations are instituting programs to help youth within their projects gain skills which will help them become self-sufficient and move out of subsidized housing, thereby focussing on the transitional nature subsidized housing. (New Brunswick, Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal).

4.3 Crime

Concern with crime by a variety of organisations has often resulted in the focus being placed on youth. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has devoted much attention in the last few years on the issue of crime, especially that of youth crime, including youth gangs. This phenomenon was mentioned by a number of organisations in Winnipeg where an increase of gang activity, including violent occurrences such as drive-by shootings, has become a concern.

The data support the over-representation of youth in crime. For example, youth 12-17 constituted 8 percent of the population in 1992 but were accused of 13 percent of all violent incidents and 27 percent of all property incidents. Those aged 18 to 34 represented 27 percent of the population while being accused of 55 percent of all violent crimes. (National Crime Prevention Council 1995) Simultaneously, youth are over-represented as victims. "According the 1993 General Social Survey, those aged 15 to 24 had a rate of personal victimisation twice that of those aged 25 to 44 and over four times that of those aged 45 to 64." (Statistics Canada cited by The Youth Justice Committee 1995)

The role of youth in crime has been over-emphasized by the media according to Youth for Habitat. "The media focuses out attention on youth street crime rather than corporate crime, leading to the "criminalization" of youth, a problem exacerbated by issues of racism and poverty." (Youth for Habitat 1996)

4.3.1 Implications for housing

The approach of Crime Prevention through Social Development (CPSD) emphasizes the importance of social factors, including employment, education and housing in preventing the conditions that favour crime, "...history has shown that many of the conditions arising from living in poverty can increase the risk of becoming involved in crime, especially for children. For example, inadequate housing is often associated with poverty and crime..." (National Crime Prevention Council 1995). CPSD, which requires a multi-faceted approach, has been difficult to implement because of its complexity. Furthermore, studies illustrating the link between social policy and crime prevention, are rare and the relationship is difficult to demonstrate. (Graham and Bennett 1995) Simultaneously, there is a wide-spread perception that crime has been the result of the culture of dependence which has emerged from social policies. (Gilling 1994) However, organisations such as the FCM have taken positions which do not blame youth but focus on larger social issues and adopt comprehensive responses, including preventative programs (for example, education, programs supporting informal surveillance and target hardening). (FCM#3503)

4.4 Debt

According to the Canadian Federation of Students, the level of debt for students is limiting their options in a number of ways. (Debt levels can range from \$22,000 to \$80,000 for a first degree in B.C. (Globe and Mail, November 14, 1996) The expectation of a high debt forces many students

to choose a program on the basis of the employment that will be available at the end, which devalues the experience of university education and can act as a disincentive to further education. Ultimately this makes the debt and education an individual problem rather than a societal one. Similar concerns were expressed to the Ministerial Task Force on Youth. "Many youth who attended the Task Force's town hall meetings expressed their serious concerns about the mounting cost of education and the debt-load which a post-secondary education has come to represent. During the Task Force meetings, education costs and student debt-loads were cited as among the principal barriers to continuing education." (Ministerial Task Force on Youth 1996)

One solution, mentioned by the Ministerial Task Force, and being studied by a number of provincial governments is the Income Contingent Loan Repayment (ICRP). However, there is concern that it will have a profound impact on the debt - rather than limiting the period of repayment to 10 years, it could be stretched over a 30 to 40 year period. According to the Canadian Federation of Students, this not only would severely limit the financial capacity of youth during their working lives, but also could justify increasing the cost of education by governments (and further increasing the individual debt).

Allan Mirabelli of the Vanier Institute for the Family points out that surveys have indicated that youth is not pessimistic about their own future, but there is concern about supporting the preceding generation and the anticipation of increased burdens for the pension plan and health care. There is also a feeling that youth is inheriting a badly managed system. The Canadian Youth Foundation has identified fiscal policy and inter-generational equity as one of the major issues for their organisation and plan to undertake work in this area; issues repeated in the findings of Ekos Research Associates (1996). Generation 2000 underlined that youth was optimistic about their own futures - they knew that they are living in a period of change and feel prepared to confront it. The expectation that the youth generation will do better than their parents is no longer as prevalent as it had been for preceding generations. While the youth often are comfortable with this situation, it is related to the socio-economic status of parents; if one's parents are doing well, then staying at the same level is considered acceptable.

4.4.1. Implications for housing

The greatest impact of a greater debt load for young people will be their limited ability to accumulate wealth. This could delay the transition to home ownership and may reduce the number of households able to gain access to this form of tenure. Differences between generations and the impact on housing consumption is beginning to manifest itself in metropolitan Toronto. While middle-class young adults have grown up in the Greater Toronto Area and will continue to do so, a polarisation of population is observed and expected to continue within the metropolitan area. "Generational inequities play out in the Metro landscape. The ageing of Metro's neighbourhoods mainly involves those born before 1945 staying in place, living in fair comfort on income and assets from yesterday's labour market. Around them, tenants live on the more insecure incomes of the new work force. Many low-income earners in today's labour market may tend to move up the income and housing scale more slowly than in the past." (Metropolitan Toronto Planning Department 1996)

4.5 Other Issues

A number of issues were raised by organisations and these often feature as topics that are dealt with in national conferences and meetings. An issue that was repeatedly mentioned by aboriginal organisations is that of youth suicide. This population has been especially touched - the average is ten times that of the overall Canadian population. Measures to increase self-esteem, to provide positive role models, and to increase contact between elders and youth are all part of a holistic approach being proposed to deal with the issues surrounding Aboriginal youth. Similar, holistic approaches are advocated by other organisations. For example, suicide is of concern to the New Brunswick Youth Council (a 1996 survey indicated that 63 percent of youth felt that suicide was a very important issue) but the issue has been placed within the need to teach coping skills.

Organisations, such as Rainbow Youth Centre in Regina, have responded to needs by instituting programs such as peer counselling which includes suicide awareness.

Another issue, more political than social, is the need for consultation and integration of youth in issues ranging from unemployment to crime. A number of provinces (Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia) and municipalities (Toronto) have set up youth councils. Aboriginal organisations have paid particular attention to the issue, given the demographic weight of youth.

5. Housing Issues

While there has been much emphasis placed by organisations dealing with youth on issues related to employment and poverty, the core experience of the 15 to 30 year old group remains that of achieving independence on all levels. Establishing a separate household and gaining access to housing remains a critical component of this transition. While youth is acknowledged as carrying a large share of the burden of unemployment and economic instability, it is also acknowledged that these have serious impact on other aspects of everyday life. The problems feed into each other and "continuing disadvantage in their non-work life can make finding a job and developing a working career all the more difficult....Labour market training and job creation measures together with the development of employment projects to assist the young unemployed are crucial elements in the solution of these problems but the roles of good and stable accommodation and of satisfactory and supportive family life are also vital." (Burton, Forrest and Stewart 1989 a) For youth at risk, stable and secure housing can act as an anchor from which a life can be built (Chicoine and Rose 1992).

Data indicate that the current Canadian youth population has modified its trajectory towards independence, especially as it relates to establishing a separate household. In Canada, between 1981 and 1991, there was a decrease in the percentage of youth between 15 and 24 living alone (35.8 percent to 30.8 percent) and an increase of those living with one or two parents (34.2 percent to 69.3 percent). The greatest change was in the 24 year old group - in 1986 29.1 percent lived with parents while in 1991 the proportion had increased to 31.5 percent. One reason may be that youth are staying in school longer. Those between 18 and 21 who were in school increased from 36.9 percent to 55.4 percent between 1981 and 1991, while 24 percent of the 22 to 24 age group were in school compared to 13.2 percent ten years earlier. (Kerr, Larrivée and Greenhalgh 1994)

While for many youth the prolonged stay in the parental home can ultimately represent a more advantageous position in the move towards independence, the experience can vary according to the family's social and economic capacity. "When the attainment of independence is increasingly reliant on family support this will favour inevitably those young people in families in the strongest social and economic situations." (Burton, Forrest and Stewart 1989 b) A French study found that the economic situation of parents not only constituted a major factor in family cohesion but also could represent difficulties for youth trying to gain economic independence. A prime example was the inability of parents in a precarious economic situation to give support to a youth who was having similar difficulties. (Study cited in Séguin 1994) Housing which is unsuitable or inadequate can result in negative impacts when youth prolong their stay in the parental home. The lack of adequate housing in the North West Territories was cited as being the top priority for the NWT Housing Corporation. For youth, overcrowding in remote and small communities has made education difficult, resulting in poor school performance and high levels of frustration and domestic violence. Even when employment is found, the lack of housing in the community makes the trajectory towards independence very difficult.

Social and familial factors can push youth away from the parental home in spite of the economic situation. Thus, family structure has been linked to departure from the parental home - youth were less likely to live with parents if these were no longer living together, especially if they had

remarried. An early departure, for those too young or those without a profession is considered to have potentially devastating impacts. (Boyd and Norris 1995) Since 1968, when grounds for divorce were expanded, Canada has seen an increase in the number of divorces. This change has been accompanied by an increase of remarriage - thus between 1967 and 1989 marriages between two previously-married persons quadrupled. (Vanier Institute of the Family 1994)

While for some youth the solution has been to prolong the stay in the parental home or to come back after an initial period of independence ("Boomerang Kids"), for a number the parental home is unsuitable. Some may find alternatives (which can range from living with a member of the extended family to homelessness), while those who remain can find themselves unable to move forward in other aspects of the trajectory towards independence, such as employment or education.

The housing issues that emerge from discussions with key informants in various organisations and agencies reflect these difficulties. Housing is rarely a unique, single-faceted issue, but the difficulty for youth to gain access to various segments of the housing market - home ownership, rental and social housing or shelters and transitional homes - is a constant theme. Housing issues are presented in four sections, beginning with that which youth groups cited as being of greatest concern - homelessness.

5.1 Homelessness

The problem of homelessness is one that is primarily situated in urban areas, a result of youth migration from small towns and rural areas. The Canadian Youth Foundation attributes the growth in the number of street youth to the unemployment situation, which has integrated both those from poor and middle-class backgrounds into an "underclass". Organisations working with homeless youth also identify difficult home situations as an important factor in the increase in numbers. Some of the difficulties in parental homes are not only related to abusive situations (physical, mental and sexual) but also to inadequacies in terms of income or housing (for example, not enough space).

The estimated numbers of homeless youth vary, from a high of 100,000 (Youth for Habitat) to a total Canadian population of 11,000 (Canadian Council on Social Development 1987). There is consensus, however, that the proportion of youth among the homeless is increasing. Youth for Habitat enlarges the definition of homelessness by including those who participate in the street culture. "A street kid is not necessarily someone who passes 24 hours a day in the street, but rather someone whose primary reference and daily reality are the streets." (Youth for Habitat 1996 b)

Homeless youth and their prospects are seen as falling into three categories; the chronically homeless who have never known stable housing (given that family shelters had existed for 15 years) and who might never be stable, the newly homeless who, with sufficient support, can become stable and a third group who could go either way. The experience of a number of organisations is that the longer a youth stays on the street, the longer will be the period required to

integrate them back into mainstream society. The solutions and approaches fall into three main categories: prevention, shelters and transitional housing.

Prevention is emphasized by numerous groups. An example of such a program is the mediation offered to parents, extended family members, and youth by Operation Go Home. Related to the prevention of homelessness or repeated homelessness, is the acquisition of life skills. Often these are offered by the agencies dealing with homeless youth (Rainbow Youth Centre, Family Place Resource Centre) or links are developed with other agencies offering these services (Youth Services Bureau). Aboriginal youth, arriving from small and remote communities to larger centres for employment or education, have been identified as an "at risk" group that requires support in dealing with mainstream and urban culture. (Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, New Directions for Children, Youth and Families)

The importance of youth shelters, away from older homeless persons, is emphasized by numerous groups. Safety issues are a prime reason for the importance accorded to separate facilities for young persons. Examples of drug and alcohol use, psychiatric problems and violence in adult shelters were cited. (Operation Go Home, Youth Without Shelter) "Many urban youth are finding that there is much less support out here of them, should they decide, or are forced to leave home. Currently, youth shelters in the city [Toronto] are filled to capacity every night and often youth are forced to stay in shelters which cater to the general and often chronic population of homeless people." (Youth for Habitat)

For a number of agencies long term solutions for homeless youth are difficult to find. Many desire to move on and get off the streets, but the lack of transitional affordable housing presents barriers. Rooming houses, an inexpensive housing alternative, are deemed unsafe for youth, especially women, because of shared services and spaces. Organisations such as the YMCA in Toronto or the network of youth shelters in Edmonton are finding ways to develop transitional housing as well as integrating housing and shelters with the acquisition of skills.

Government cutbacks were mentioned by most agencies as a serious problem. In Ottawa, cuts represented a loss of 80 units in a youth housing project. The Youth Services Bureau reacted by narrowing the target group from 16 - 24 to 16 - 21. Many programs were not supported for an adequate period of time, making it difficult for agencies offering a wide-range of services to assure continuity. Changes in governmental priorities meant that programs were constantly being readjusted, ultimately representing a disservice to youth. (Rainbow Youth Centre)

5.2 Rental Housing

The situation of rental housing is different in rural and urban areas. The lack of sufficient housing in small communities forces young families, including single mothers, to choose between moving to larger towns, away from family support, or to stay in unsuitable housing (location, price, size, quality, etc.).

In urban areas, access to rental housing is difficult for younger persons. Often those 16 to 17 need parental approval or their countersignature on the lease (Youth for Habitat - Montreal, Youth Services Bureau - Toronto). Given that these youth are often escaping a difficult home situation, this requirement precludes access to housing. References are sometimes required and, given many young people lack housing experience, this is a further barrier, especially when coupled with the unwillingness or inability of parents to support the youth.

Discrimination against youth appears to be a major concern, not only in markets where the vacancy rate is low (Toronto and Vancouver) but also in Montreal, where landlords prefer to leave units empty rather than renting to youth. The situation is exacerbated if their appearance (hair colour, nose rings, etc) further marginalises them. If the youth is from a shelter, they are further discriminated against by landlords. (Youth Without Shelter) Youth often do not know their rights. In Toronto there were cases of demands for key money or eviction without proper notice or cause (Children's Aid), while discrimination cases could take up to four years to be heard by the courts.

The units that young people do have are often in very bad condition and their economic situation forces some to share with others. (Youth for Habitat) Overcrowding is a concern and for some, these co-op arrangements are difficult, given their lack of skills in conflict resolution. (Children's Aid, Toronto) The condition of the housing has impacts on the health of the children of young single mothers. (Children's Aid Toronto)

Proposed changes to rent control by the Ontario provincial government are of concern to a number of organisations. The impact will be primarily on newcomers to the rental housing market and those who move often - youth. According to various groups, the long term impact will be the loss of affordable housing. Other proposed changes will make condominium conversion much easier, further reducing the rental housing stock. (City of Toronto, Canadian Federation of Students)

Squatting in abandoned buildings by youth is one approach that has been proposed in larger urban centres. In Montreal, the Youth for Habitat forum proposed that the rights of squatters be recognized and that buildings which have been empty for over two years be eligible for legal squatting, while squatters assume responsibility for renovation and care of the buildings (with access to government programs to do so). In Europe, a similar recommendation emerged from analysis of the housing situation of young people, "Local authorities should consider whether legal standards can be relaxed in order to facilitate new approaches to living, especially in old or redundant buildings. Similarly, regulation concerning the occupancy of vacant or derelict buildings may be revised to allow (young) people to meet their immediate housing needs." (Burton, Forrest and Stewart 1989 a)

5.3 Social Housing

The poverty of youth-led households is reflected in the proportion of these who, in 1991, were in core need; 29 percent of the total (Core Housing Need Database 1988 & 1991 cited in CMHC

1996). Three quarters of these were single parents. Data is not available on their proportion of households in social housing units. (The Co-operative Housing Federation foresees a survey in 1996-1997 as part of its Youth Action Plan.) However, a number of organisations feel that social housing providers are just as discriminatory toward youth as the private sector. Furthermore, social housing traditionally has not reflected the needs of youth, rather focussing on families and seniors. Similar biases were found in Europe. "A feature of social housing in many countries is the priority given to young single parents as opposed to other young single people. Stated simply, pregnancy is often the quickest route to being allocated a dwelling in the social rented sector. (Burton, Forrest and Stewart 1989 a)

The allocation of what will become a scarcer resource (unless an infusion of funding is provided to new social housing) is leading to discussion and programs that emphasize the transitional nature of social housing, especially public housing. In Montreal, for example, programs have been instituted which support youth in school and in the integration into the labour market. While these services are responding to a need within projects, the long-term objective is to reduce inter-generational use of public housing. Not all authorities share this objective, the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority (MTHA) is emphasizing the creation and strengthening of communities. While support is given to youth (leadership programs, conflict resolution, life skills, etc.), resident participation and community building is a major objective. Young households are not dissuaded from continuing to live in projects where they have grown up and which are close to family members.

A senior housing policy analyst in Newfoundland summarised the issue of social housing by linking it to the complete housing situation; the inability of youth to enter the private market has an impact on social housing, "We have to look at the whole picture. How the private market is operating has serious repercussions on the need for social housing."

5.4 Home ownership

The rate of home ownership is considerably lower among youth-led households (15-24) than for all households, 13.9 percent compared to 64.4 percent. (Core Housing Need Database 1988 & 1991 cited in CMHC 1996) In Quebec, the proportion of buyers of new housing aged less than 35 decreased from 75 percent in 1983 to 54 percent in 1994 (Société d'habitation du Québec 1995) In Metro Toronto, while the proportion of household heads between 15 and 24 who were home owners remained constant between 1981 and 1991 (8.6 versus 8.7 percent), household heads between 25 and 34 who were home owners dropped from 32.7 percent to 23.8 percent in the ten year period. (Similar patterns were found for the Greater Toronto area. Metropolitan Toronto Planning Department 1996)

The CHBA underlines generational inequality - 62 percent of households who own their homes are mortgage free, while many young people cannot afford to move out of the parental home. According to the CHBA, mortgage instruments, such as shared equity, would facilitate access to home ownership. However, it was emphasized that such programs should not be targetted by age - they should be accessible to all.

The inability of the youth population to enter the home ownership market, coupled with their low numbers, is expected to have an impact on current home owners who will find themselves unable to sell their homes. "Such circumstances could lead to affordability problems for those seniors who may have considered their ownership unit an investment and who may be depending upon its eventual sale as a source of retirement income." (Province of New Brunswick 1996)

In areas where the cost of home ownership is not as high, such as Nova Scotia, access to home ownership is deemed difficult for the working poor. Those working in the service industries at minimum wage did not have the assets to secure a loan and, although the monthly cost of owning was close to rental housing, the lack of job stability was identified as a barrier. On the positive side, the low cost was attractive for certain groups, especially those in the arts or those working from home.

6. Housing innovations and best practices

Many of the initiatives which have been flagged in this report deal with solutions to problems experienced by particular segments of youth, for example, homeless persons, those trying to attain stable housing, and residents of subsidized housing. A policy targetting a broad spectrum of youth and their housing situation was not found. The lack of research about Canadian youth and the housing situation that confronts them might be a reason why the issue has not been addressed from a broad perspective.

However, it would appear that youth issues are gaining more attention. Information exists or will be forthcoming from initiatives such as the Children and Youth Secretariat in Manitoba and the Action Plan for Children in Saskatchewan. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities is considering making demographic change a focal point in their research agenda over the next year and to present conclusions at the 1997 Conference. Youth would be a component of this study. An inter-ministerial committee of the Quebec government has focussed on the issue of youth. The Société d'habitation du Québec will soon undertake a number of studies to better understand the youth housing situation. British Columbia has targetted youth in housing programs - Homes B.C. includes a Homeless/At Risk youth component.

It is perhaps reassuring to note that the European experience has been that policy measures directed at young people have generally focussed on only one aspect of transition to adulthood - that from full-time education to work. "Other aspects of transition, from living with one's parents to living independently or from youth to adulthood have not been studied in such depth or been the subject of such extensive policy development." (Burton, Forrest and Stewart 1989 a)

Innovations and best practices were found in three general areas: homelessness; education, integration and participation; and design. Youth homelessness has received considerable attention and, although the numbers of homeless and at risk youth are relatively small, they are a highly visible population with serious needs and perhaps they symbolize the difficulties that all youth are having in finding their place in the economy and the society. While a number of innovative and interesting initiatives are presented which provide housing and services to homeless youth, some of the most creative are initiatives that maximize existing resources and develop means to deliver services without exclusive reliance on government funding. In a number of cases, the removal of formal programs and the rigidity that often accompanied them, seems to have resulted in initiatives that address needs that were previously unanswered or that provide multi-faceted responses to complex problems.

A second category of initiatives deals with education, participation and integration in housing. Although some deal with homeless or at risk youth, a number address the entire youth population within a category of housing (public housing) or preparation of youth for careers in the housing field. Included in this category are university-based *Public Interest Research Groups* (PIRG) which are run by students and not only offer information about community and housing issues, but also offer students the opportunity to become actively involved in ongoing community projects

(which may or may not be recognised as course work). For example, although not formally related to the PIRG, students in all four Montreal universities did collaborate in setting up the *Triangle Rose* housing co-op. Established 1994, the co-op offers 28 units with shared bathrooms and kitchens to university and community college students. Another example is a project supported by "The Bunker", a popular Montreal youth shelter (considered to offer non-judgemental services). *Punk not Junk*, run by street youth, uses popular culture tools (punk music, posters, etc.) to warn peers about the consequences of heroin addiction. (It should be noted that the youth involved in this initiative have resisted contact with mainstream society, information about the project was obtained through Youth for Habitat.)

The final category of initiatives deals with concept and design. While few projects have been conceived with the youth generation as a primary focus, a movement to explore new more flexible forms of housing have or are currently being developed. The focus can be on reducing the cost of home ownership by minimising land costs and unit size as in the "Next Home", while other examples, such as the "Grow Home", offer a modest first home that can accommodate changing needs and increasing financial means. Work is being done on integration of home and office, a growing need, especially for the youth generation which is about to enter or has entered the job market. The transitional phase, from parental home to self-sufficiency is addressed by design options found in some cohousing projects.

6. 1 Youth Homelessness

Long-term solutions to youth homelessness must go beyond providing for immediate needs (shelter, food) and help with the process of integration back into society. The agencies that deal with youth often find themselves concentrating on is normally a long trajectory towards independence, into a relatively short period of time. The initiatives that are presented below exemplify co-ordinated and integrated approaches. The first sub-category of initiatives presents agencies offering comprehensive and successive services. *Long Term Services for Youth in Halifax*, one of the best examples of this approach, started the first of its initiatives in 1987 and continued to build on this over the next seven years. Fiscal restraint by most governments may make this model more difficult to emulate in the future. Initiatives which are trying to meet needs in new ways are presented. Co-ordination of services, the second sub-category, has allowed providers to maximize existing facilities and to target areas that are not being catered to. Streamlining of services, exemplified by the Toronto YMCA, is expected not only to offer more comprehensive services to homeless youth, but to increase the number of beds without increasing operating budgets.

6. 1.1 Comprehensive and continuous services

The Halifax organisation, *Long Term Services for Youth*, perhaps best exemplifies the response to the range of services needed by homeless youth. Four initiatives which were developed between 1987 and 1994 illustrate a continuum approach.

- ♦ Phoenix House - a 10 bed shelter for men and women aged 16 to 24.

- ♦ Follow up of residents of Phoenix House - contact is maintained with over 200 youth who have spent any amount of time in Phoenix House. The support given varies from reunions to crisis intervention.
- ♦ Supervised apartments - three houses, accommodating up to three clients and support in each house, provide transitional housing. The length of stay is open-ended, but residents must leave when they reach 24.
- ♦ Phoenix Centre for Youth is a drop in centre providing counselling, health and other services.

A more modest proposal will be initiated in Montreal. The *Auberge Communautaire*, which offers housing to homeless youth, plans to set up transitional, supervised housing. Existing units in the private rental sector will be used and a housing supplement (part of the public housing program) will reduce rents. This subsidy will be available for up to two years and vary according to the financial situation of the youth. Support will be provided by social workers (an agreement has been signed with the provincial government) to help youth integrate into the wider community.

The continuum of services is often provided de facto by the co-ordination of services and co-operation of agencies. For example, *Operation Go Home*, after reconciliation is deemed to be unfeasible, will contact shelters and agencies to place runaway youth

Most transition houses provide support and services to reintegrate youth into the wider community. A commitment from youth to pursue studies, follow treatment for personal difficulties (substance abuse, psychological counselling) or search for work is often required. For example, *Youth in Transition*, offers housing for up to five young women at a time. They can stay in the house for up to one year (although there is flexibility in the length of stay) but must commit themselves to either going to school or to work. This requirement is repeated in projects in Edmonton, Halifax, Montreal. The experience of the *Calgary Connection Housing Society* shows that long-term needs cannot be met by providing temporary shelter and that "hooks" can be used to involve and commit homeless and at risk youth to projects, but that these must allow youth control and appropriation. A second hand furniture store was started and all but the managers were youth. Only one out of 20 participants quit, and 30 percent have moved on to regular employment and two have gone back to school.

6.1.2 Co-ordination of services

Inner City Youth Housing in Edmonton is one of four agencies which have combined forces to provide transitional services for homeless youth. Five homes in four inner city neighbourhoods have been renovated. These offer short-term care (up to one month) and long-term care (up to the age of 18) for four youth per house. These are coed, in an attempt to recreate a blended family. Each youth has their own bedroom and house rules are kept to a minimum. Commitment to school or a job search is a prerequisite. Although the model of transitional housing is similar to a number of other initiatives such as *Phoenix House* or *Youth in Transition*, this project is the result of inter-organisation co-operation and co-ordination. The organisations analyzed what services they

were currently offering and which were missing. The joint venture has created strong links between the organisations ("we are no longer dating but married") and the co-ordination has continued. Recent discussions have identified young pregnant mothers and parents as a current gap in services.

An initiative which is closely linked to the various Edmonton youth organisations is *Kids in the Hall*. Opened during the summer in 1996, it is a restaurant in the Edmonton City Hall which is staffed by homeless youth who live in shelters and transition homes. (Shelters and transition homes are strongly linked to the project.) Local restaurateurs are donating volunteers to teach all aspects of the trade. Half of the training is for the restaurant the other half focuses on educational and social needs. Financing for the initiative was provided in part by Human Resources and Development Canada, but support from the private sector, the city and social agencies (who it is expected, will use the services to cater regular events) are critical components of the initiative.

6.1.3 Streamlining of services

The Toronto *YMCA* is proposing to initiate a shelter/transitional housing project based on the European *foyer* model, which has been used in France and England. Currently operating a 50 bed shelter, the model is expected to reduce the staffing requirements, allowing an increase to 60 beds in the new project. (The *YMCA* is currently searching for a building.) Because of more efficient use of resources, the operating budget is expected to remain constant (\$350,000 has been set aside by the municipality for renovations).

The project will offer 25 beds in a regular shelter model, 5 high-support beds and the remaining 30 units will be divided into 4 bedroom units with shared bathrooms and kitchens. (A number will be set aside for young couples or single mothers.) Individuals will be able to stay in the foyer up to one year and life skills, ranging from how to manage a budget to how to buy furniture, will be a component of the program. Once individuals leave, continued support will be offered. The model is expected to reduce the policing function of staff and to make better use of their capabilities.

An element of the foyer model, which eventually could be integrated, is that of opening up the project to the community. In Europe, elements such as a gym, are often part of the project and accessible to non-residents. Marginalised youth can feel excluded from the wider society. This has been found to be an effective method to break some of the barriers. The *YMCA* eventually would like to initiate such a project and link it to community economic development, for example by opening a restaurant. (A strong program in training people in food services already exists at the *YMCA*.)

6.2 Education, participation and integration

Social housing agencies, primarily public housing authorities, have undertaken a number of initiatives to deal with issues affecting youth in their projects and to better prepare them for

independence (including independence of public housing). Included in this category are efforts in social housing to integrate youth in decision-making. These initiatives are presented as a sub-category. A second sub-category includes efforts to train youth in their role as tenants. Some initiatives integrate landlords and managers of private housing in the training of youth, thereby offering an occasion to reduce negative perceptions of youth. More formal educational initiatives are presented in the third sub-category.

6.2.1 Social Housing

Introduction to Independent Living Skills, a small component of the New Brunswick public housing *Home Orientation and Management Program*, is a pilot projet which started in Moncton in partnership with the University of Moncton. The program targets at risk youth and aims to build life skills, self-esteem and eliminate the stigma attached to youth in public housing. While the underlying aim is to avoid multi-generational public housing use, the group of facilitators who offer six three-hour sessions to up to ten youth at a time, deal with issues such as knowledge of oneself, identification of individual uniqueness, budgeting. The program is planned to be expanded to all regions of New Brunswick and the manual that will serve as a basis should be completed by March 1997.

Life skills training appears to be an important component of projects dealing with homeless youth (for example *Youth in Transition* in Fredericton or the planned day centre of *Le Bon Dieu dans la Rue*, a street kids outreach program in Montreal) while organisations dealing with broader components of youth issues are focussing on the need for this kind of education (for example, Aboriginal organisations).

The Quebec Housing Corporation is piloting a project in a number of public housing corporations to encourage the integration of youth (*Centre des Jeunes*) while linking up to various other agencies servicing this population (school boards, municipal services, etc.) The *Office municipal d'habitation in Montreal* (OMHM) has set up a number of centres which cater to the 6 to 25 population. For younger residents, support is given in school work. Older residents are given options that include sports and leisure activities as well as information about AIDS, violence and conflict resolution. For the oldest group, job training is offered. A catering service has been instituted in one project, which gives training in food preparation and related services.

The *Youth Services Bureau* (Ottawa) administers 43 non-profit units for youth (including students, singles and young parents). Participation and responsibility for housing is being encouraged through the formation of a tenant association. Since its creation, residents have found themselves increasingly taking responsibility for day to day operations. The *Co-operative Housing Federation* (CHF) of Canada has adopted a Youth Action Plan which will involve four areas of activity:

- ♦ youth input into the strategy which includes a survey of membership, promotion of the Action Plan in the CHF journal, exploration of opportunities of co-operation between CHF and student co-ops and participation in a number of youth conferences,

- ♦ develop resource materials for local co-ops,
- ♦ involvement of federations and resource groups,
- ♦ involvement of youth in current activities, notably the annual general meeting and training sessions.

6.2.2 Advocacy and training

The *Youth Housing Coalition* in British Columbia, following a Youth Housing Forum held in March 1996, has adopted a project for youth which is composed of three initiatives : community education to heighten awareness of the needs of youth, a housing registry, and education of landlords about housing and youth.

A similar project was proposed by the *YMCA* in Toronto in an attempt to bridge the gap between landlords and tenants. Managers of rental housing were to be invited to teach youth the skills needed to become tenants and explain what landlords were looking for when renting a unit. The project was also an attempt to "demythologize" youth by introducing managers to young people and thereby overcoming some of their own prejudices.

6.2.3 Formal education

The Quebec high school curriculum makes a home economics course mandatory in grade 8. This course encompasses what are generally described as 'life skills' - budgeting, consumer education and interpersonal relationships. A similar course is offered by the Toronto Board of Education. A more targetted housing course is offered by the *Larnark County Board of Education* in Ontario. Two projects within the Construction Technology program have taken a group of youth through the process of identifying housing needs, design, construction and marketing of a single family house. Various skills needed throughout the process are experimented with, from framing and wiring to writing of brochures and holding open houses. A number of other vocational programs (Toronto Board of Education, Renfrew-Frontenac Board of Education) offer courses that integrate youth in various phases of housing production, that in Lanark County however, appears to be unique in giving youth the responsibility for all the phases.

6.3 Design

The CHBA cited a number of examples of design which facilitate home ownership. The *Charlie House*, being demonstrated in Hamilton, allows for increased or decrease living space for the owner depending on their financial situation or space requirements. The *Grow Home*, by reducing the size and level of finished space, decreases the cost of a first home. Other design initiatives are currently underway. Avi Friedman from McGill University has introduced the *Next Home*, designed to meet the needs of three target groups, "a semi-retired widower who works at home, a childless couple buying their first home and a single mother with two children". (The Gazette, August 27, 1996) Each floor of the three-unit building costs \$50,000 to build, thus targetting households with an annual income of \$28,000.

François Cadotte and Jocelyn Duff are studying design of a housing co-operative which incorporates space for the self-employed. Preliminary research on the self-employed indicates that the average age of this population is 37, attributable in part to the importance of experience and networks in successful self-employment. With the changes that the economy is currently undergoing, it can be anticipated, however, that the results of this project and other similar ones that integrate work spaces to home, will respond to needs of the youth population.

The cohousing movement is offering real options to help youth through the transitional phase. The collective nature of the housing and the identification of services which will be offered make it unique. The *Windsong Cohousing Community*, in Langley B.C., provides two guest rooms which can be used as transition rooms for youth. In Victoria, the cohousing project has included a number 'swing suites' which can serve as transitional housing for youth, visitor suites or other situations requiring short and medium-term housing.

Appendix 1 : ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

1. Annotated Bibliography

1.1 Youth and Housing

A number of research projects are currently being undertaken or have just been completed. The Société d'habitation du Québec is undertaking a study to identify the situation of youth in housing. The Family Services of Greater Vancouver have just completed a province-wide survey of homeless youth.

Accommodation and Social Cohesion in the Urban Environment - the implications for young People

Paul Burton, Ray Forrest, Murray Stewart

The European Foundation For the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
Shankill, Ireland 1989

The report presents an overview of the major issues affecting youth and their transition to independence. Responses to housing problems from nine European countries are presented, followed by a comparison and recommendations. The report underlines that "Changes in the structure and amount of available work, the varying role and capacity of family to provide support, the rigidities of housing policy and provision are combining to create situations of real crisis for some groups of young people and there appears to be little recognition of their problems." The analysis leads to the conclusion that although there is variation in policy development in Europe, "we have not seen an equivalent degree of respect granted to young people as a specific age group with some specific needs in the spheres of housing and social policy." The authors feel that there must be recognition of the "multiplicity of problems facing many young people and the fact that they are frequently connected."

Canadian Housing

Winter 1996, Vol 12 N° 3

Issue devoted to Youth and Housing

Two projects addressing the issue of homeless youth are presented, *Youth in Transition*, in Fredericton and *L'Auberge Communautaire*, in Montreal. Youth and Habitat II and the issue of youth and crime are discussed.

Growing Up and Leaving Home

Paul Burton, Ray Forrest, Murray Stewart

The European Foundation For the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
Shankill, Ireland 1989

This study commissioned by the European Commission within the context of the United Nations Year of Shelter for the Homeless in 1987, examines issues of living conditions (housing and family life) and the relationship to opportunities available in the work context. A premise of the study is that "There is already considerable concern over problems of homelessness, drug and

alcohol abuse, and crime and vandalism amongst young people. Labour market training and job creation measures together with the development of employment projects to assist the young unemployed are crucial element in the solution of these problems but the roles of good and stable accommodation and of satisfactory and supportive family live are also vital." Main research findings include that while greater flexibility in the European labour market require greater flexibility in urban housing markets, housing systems are rigid and that youth suffer disproportionately from this. As well, a minority of youth was found to be increasingly excluded from mainstream society and that this was often tied to lack of access to proper accommodation. This issue was found to be generally low on the political agenda and increasingly the public response took the form of emergency accommodation.

Home for Our Children : A report form the national housing forum

Jane Darke, Jean Conway and Christine Holman

National Housing Forum c/o Association of District Councils

London 1993

The report points out that the process of becoming adult has become more complex and more uncertain in terms of employment and relationships. A minority of youth are able to acquire housing unaided, but the majority require financial assistance while a small minority need social as well as financial support. Certain minorities face additional problems; black youth, gay men and lesbians, people with disabilities and those who have not had a stable parental home. A survey of youth identified major expectations and problems. Both private and social housing responses to youth are examined and a number of programs which offer assistance to youth are presented

Logement et Nouveaux Modes de Vie

François Cadotte et Jocelyn Duff

Éditions du Méridien

Montreal 1992

The book does not deal exclusively with the issue of youth but, within the context of changing family composition, presents an analysis and some designs which focus on smaller units, flexibility and multiple uses. The sharing of space between parents and adolescents while providing spaces to allow independence is pertinent, especially in the context of a prolonged period of transition to independent youth households. Some of the results of the competition, *L'Art de vivre en ville*, which partially focused on cohabitation of youth and parents, are included.

1.2 Youth and Employment

Reconnecting Younger Canadians : Problems and Solutions from the Labour Market

Ekos Research Associates Inc.

May 1996

Based on focus groups with youth, on interviews with organisations serving youth, and on statistics, the report underlines the "alarming" rate of unemployment among youth, the prolonged period of transition from school to work, delayed household formation and the polarization of the youth labour market based on education. Youth is over-represented in part-time or non-standard

jobs and 27 percent of youth are involuntarily employed part-time. Data indicate a widening gap in real annual earnings between youth (17-24) and those between 45 and 54 (men only). The current generation is found to have the highest educational attainment, to be the most highly comfortable with new technology, but also more likely to be from "sub-nuclear" families. Negative attitudes emerge towards government - youth are cynical and do not believe that social programs will be there for them. There is consensus that economically, the current generation does not compare favourably to that of their parents and there is evidence of declining expectations. Results are presented by sub-group, including three categories of the youth labour market (knowledge workers, dead-end labour market and indeterminate or "swing" segment), aboriginal youth, employers, and NGOs. Recommendations range from avoiding "overpromising in light of existing scepticism" to including a youth advisory panel in consultation and policy development.

Youth Unemployment: Canada's Hidden Deficit

Canadian Youth Foundation

Ottawa 1995

Current trends in youth unemployment are presented, including the impact of post secondary education, gender inequality, and regional disparity. Street culture is attributed the current situation. "While many young people have accepted their lot in taking on part-time work, and moving with a greater degree of transience from one uncertain job setting to another, a significant proportion reject this low standard of opportunity for their future. ...For these youth, the only option available is the life on the street."

1.3 Statistical portrait of Canadian youth

Children and Youth : An Overview

Don Kerr, Daniel Larrivée and Patricia Greenhalgh

Statistics Canada and Prentice Hall

Scarborough, Ontario 1994

Based on the 1991 census, this report presents an analysis of the situation of children (0 to 14 years) and youth (15 to 24 years). The number of youth within the Canadian population and in the provinces and territories is presented. The family context is presented (common law marriages, single parents) as well as statistics on education, work and revenue.

Youth in Canada

Colin Lindsay, Mary Sue Devereaux and Michael Bergob

Statistics Canada (N° 89-511F)

Ottawa, March 1994

Data on demographics of youth, based on the 1991 census (including urban and rural youth, visible minorities and aboriginal peoples), family situation, education, work and revenue is presented.

The Vanier Institute for the Family

A number of publications, dealing with the changing situation of the family and how it affects youth, have been produced. *Transition* March 1993 deals with "Family Incomes: Will your children be as well off as you?". December 1992 has an article about values, "Are the kids alright? What's shaping the attitude, values and behaviour of our young people?". A number of publications have dealt with changes in the family structure in Canada, for example *Profiling Canada's Families* (1994) and *Canada's Changing Families: Challenges to Public Policy* (1994).

1.4 Youth and Crime

Youth involved in crime represents a small proportion of the population, however much attention has been focussed on this issue in Canada.

The National Crime Prevention Council

An advisory council set up to share and exchange information about crime prevention research and activities across the country, it has produced three documents of interest. A literature review of *Crime Prevention through Social Development* (CPSD) emphasizes the importance of community development and empowerment and presents examples of programs that work. The *Inventory of Federal Activities in Crime Prevention* offers an overview of federal programs, some which focus directly on youth. *Prevention and Children Committee: A Compendium of Approaches from Across Canada* presents initiatives from all ten provinces and two territories, many of these focus on youth support. The *Youth Justice Committee* was mandated to develop a strategy and recommendations to the National Crime Prevention Council on the issue of crime prevention for youth. Programs dealing with community-based prevention, early intervention and support for older children and youth, are presented in the Committee's report.

Youth Violence and Youth Gangs: Responding to Community Concerns Federation of Canadian Municipalities Ottawa

The report presents an overview of the issue of youth violence in Canada. Suggestions directed at community responses are presented and include youth, police, schools and agencies. The conclusion underlines the important role that societal forces play and the need for a balanced and comprehensive response.

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The Vanier Institute of the Family

Ottawa 1994

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Canadian Social Trends

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Burton Paul, Ray Forrest, Murray Stewart

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Canadian Youth Foundation

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Être Jeunes et se Loger

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Homeless Youth

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Montreal 1992

Youth Council of New Brunswick and Youth Futures

Bulletin

Vol. 1 No. 2 May 1996

Fredericton

Youth for Habitat

Presenting the Canadian Youth Habitat Best Practices Info-Sheet

Ottawa 1996

Youth for Habitat

"Home is Where We Live." Canadian Youth Declaration for Habitat II

Ottawa May 1996

Appendix 2 : MAJOR CANADIAN AGENCIES, ORGANISATIONS, FIRMS AND
KEY INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN YOUTH ISSUES

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